



Recycle This! Newsletter

*Newsletter of the Maine State Planning Office, Waste Management & Recycling Program * June 2002*

Money for Recycling?

One of the past legislative session actions was the passage of LD 2120, the bill that carried the 'Environmental Bond Requests'



through legislative hearings, actions and to final signing. LD 2120, which is now known as Public & Special Law Chapter 71, authorizes \$24.1 million in bonds to support various environmental activities. Of the \$24.1 million, \$1.5 million is earmarked to assist with the development of public recycling infrastructure (\$600,000) and household hazardous waste (HHW) management (\$900,000). The bond request will be on the voter's ballot in November of this year. Should Maine voters approve the bond, funds should be available in late winter/early spring of 2003 to assist communities, regions and eligible entities in constructing/improving/expanding recycling and composting operations as well as to assist with developing appropriate management systems for HHW, including Universal Wastes and mercury-containing products.

In order to speed up the process, should the bond be approved, SPO staff will review past competitive grant programs and provide guidance to municipalities, regions and others, on applying for these newly approved bond monies. We will keep you posted on the process, if the bond is approved.

Communities Give Electronics Recycling a Try!

Electronics recycling continues to gain in popularity as communities recognize how easy it can be to add electronics to their list of recyclables. Many regional HHW programs have added electronics in with the other universal waste already being collected. Below, we highlight two programs that have explored new ways to handle their e-waste.

- On May 1, 2002, the Pittsfield region began accepting electronics at their transfer station. Pittsfield now sends electronics for recycling just as they do with their traditional recyclables. The region's 10 communities will be recycling electronics on an ongoing basis, and Pittsfield itself is extending the services to businesses. Pittsfield's businesses and residents can drop off an unlimited number of electronics at no charge. Residents of the region's other 9 member communities should contact their town offices for more information.

- On May 4, 2002, Sandy River Recycling Association in Farmington held a one-day event and collected 14,614 pounds of electronics. This collection served a region of 21 communities and *(cont'd on page 4)*



Above: A truck is unloaded at the Electronics Collection held at the Sandy River Recycling Association

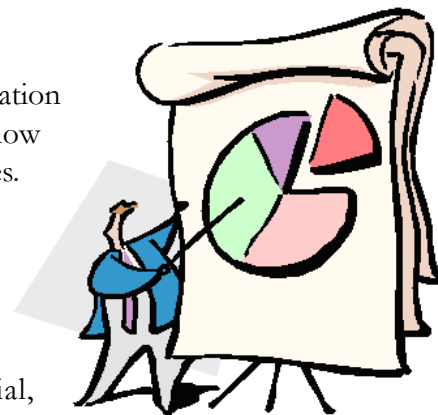
2001 Recycling Reports

By the third week of May, towns and regions representing 72% of Maine's population had submitted their 2001 Solid Waste and Recycling report. Initial results show that there are slight changes from 2000 in residential waste and recycling tonnages. The State Planning Office (SPO) will wait until most towns and regions have submitted their report before summarizing the 2001 data and preparing a 2001 statewide report.

The 2001 Municipal/Regional Recycling Reports created by SPO contain an analysis section with calculations of per person generation of residential, commercial and bulky waste and recyclables. The per person generation numbers are indicators of a town or region's performance. Based on the 221 reports that have been processed, the per person generation of residential waste is 0.439 tons (878 lbs.) per year, and the per person generation of residential recyclables is 0.077 tons (154 lbs.) per year. Towns and regions with per person residential waste figures above 0.439 tons generally had a low to modest recycling rate. Towns or regions with per person waste generation below 0.439 tons often had recycling figures above the statewide average of 0.077 tons, resulting in a higher recycling rate.

In addition to the analysis, SPO provides two graphs showing recycling rates and tons of recycling materials since 1993. These graphs are excellent illustrations of the trend of a town or region's recycling progress. If your town or region has completed its 2001 report, please examine and share with your community/region the two graphs prepared by SPO.

This fall, after all the 2001 reports have been received, the statewide average per person generation of residential trash and recyclables will be calculated and incorporated into the 2001 analysis for your town or region so that comparisons can be made between your program and the statewide average.



Plans for Maine Recycles Week 2002 are Underway

The Maine Recycles Week (MRW) 2002 Steering Committee met for the first time on May 7, 2002 at the State Planning Office to begin planning for this year's campaign. Committee members attending were: Diane Doe, SHAREcenter; John Albertini, Maine Resource Recovery Association; Morgan Harriman, City of Lewiston; Pat Maloney, Project Learning Tree; Sigrid Houlette, Northern Maine Development Commission; Scott Cavanagh, Guilford of Maine, and Shannon Haines, SPO.

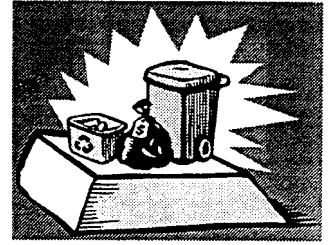
The committee recognized the success of the school portion of MRW in past years and decided that those programs, including the poster contest, will remain largely unchanged. The committee also determined that the municipal contest that was held last year was not very successful in involving municipalities in the MRW campaign. The overall sense was that municipalities need something that is easy for them to sign onto due to the high number of demands for their time. In response to this, the committee came up with a campaign that could involve both municipalities and businesses in a meaningful way without requiring a large time commitment on their part.

The committee will develop a pledge to buy recycled content paper and offer this pledge to municipalities and businesses across the state along with information on sources for recycled content paper. Businesses and municipalities signing onto the pledge will be listed on the MRW web site. As in past years, municipalities and businesses will also be encouraged to hold a recycling-related event during the week of November 8-15, but the pledge will provide a means for towns to participate without having to coordinate a whole separate event.

If you have any questions or comments regarding Maine Recycles Week, please contact Shannon Haines at SPO at 1-800-662-4545.

After a Decade of “Pay as You Throw” in Maine, New Study will look at a Municipal Based Programs

Has ‘Pay As You Throw’ (PAYT) achieved the reductions in overall solid waste program costs, disposal costs, and wastes as well as the increase in recycling amounts that was promised when the program was first introduced more than a decade ago by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)?



A new study planned by SPO will attempt to answer that question, and several others, as we look at the strengths and weaknesses of the ties that bind Maine municipal governments, their citizens and their trash together in an increasingly complex and costly situation.

As the old town dumps began to close by the score and transfer stations became the norm, PAYT, coupled with access to reasonably convenient recycling opportunities, became one of the principle tools promoted to and used by Maine communities to drive up recycling rates, drive down the tons of MSW sent to the State’s limited number of landfills and incinerators, and control costs. It has also been used as the ultimate exercise in local control, with each household making its own waste management decisions.

Seven years ago, the Margaret Chase Smith Center did an in-depth study of PAYT and concluded that as an MSW management tool, PAYT worked to the benefit of the programs that used it. Since then SPO has continually surveyed and updated information about and contact with Maine PAYT programs (see the pull down menu at our website www.recyclemaine.com.)

SPO plans to update and expand upon that study in light of the ten years worth of data the WM&R Program has collected from Maine towns and cities. We will also broaden the scope to look at the issues of municipal investment and involvement, the cost and complexity of maintaining local control, and the alternatives of privatization or turning to regional or statewide programs. We will do this by looking at certain key information collected statewide

and a selected number of case studies. The study will also attempt to gauge the level of satisfaction and municipal commitment to the present MSW system under which each town/city chooses its own solid waste management system and bears its costs. The study will look at the capacity of the municipalities to keep their individual programs in place in light of higher costs, complex regulations, and the potential loss of disposal sites.



The way in which Maine’s municipal programs are managed and whether or not they take a short or long-term viewpoint has a direct impact on the state’s capacity to handle its own wastes. Municipal action or inaction will directly influence the amount of time before Maine communities are faced with the need for a new landfill.

Updated Waste Management Services Directory Now Available!

One of SPO’s most requested publications, the Maine Waste Management Services Directory, has just been updated. The Waste Management Services Directory provides a comprehensive list of brokers, processors, and markets for recyclable materials, reuse services, vendors of recycling equipment, disposal facilities, and consultants. The new directory is available as a searchable database on the SPO web site at www.recyclemaine.com. Look for the link in the Special Features column on the home page. Hard copies of the directory are also available by request by calling Rhonda Cartlidge at SPO at 207-287-8934 or 1-800-662-4545.

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Electronics Recycling

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over 26,000 people. Also collected at this event were fluorescent light bulbs, thermometers, thermostats, ballasts, and recyclable batteries.

Many other Maine communities may be considering electronics recycling. A number of companies are offering a "turn-key" service; that is, the company charges residents directly and there is no cost to your community.



For more information on electronics recycling, please visit the SPO web site at: www.recyclemaine.com or call Tom Miragliuolo at SPO at 207-287-9074 or 1-800-662-4545.

Coming Soon

June 21 is the **first day of summer**.
Enjoy!!



The **Northeast Resource Recovery Association** is holding their **21st Annual Recycling Conference & Exposition** on **June 27 & 28** in **Manchester, NH**. For more information, contact NRRA at 603-798-5777 or visit the web site at www.recyclewithus.org.

Solid Waste Association of North America (SWANA) presents the **6th Annual Planning and Management Symposium, July 10-12, 2002** in **Halifax, Nova Scotia**. For registration information, visit the web site at www.swana.org or call 1-800-GO-SWANA.

Maine Recycles Week 2002 is **November 8-15!** Mark your calendar now! *(See page 2 for more information on MRW 2002.)*

Recycling is NOT garbage!

Tips for defending recycling against the naysayers

At some point, everyone in the recycling field has had to defend their program against criticism, whether it was a local citizen's complaints or an anti-recycling article published in a major daily newspaper. As recycling professionals know, the majority of attacks against recycling are often based on oversimplification of environmental issues or political philosophies. The following is a list (adapted from the National Recycling Council) of common attacks used by opponents of recycling and simple ways that you can defend your program against such criticism.

THE ATTACK: Recycling costs too much.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK

- Well-run recycling programs cost less than landfills and incinerators.
- The more people recycle, the cheaper it gets.
- Recycling helps families save money, especially in communities with pay-as-you-throw programs.
- Recycling generates revenue to help pay for itself, while landfilling does not.



THE ATTACK: Recycling should pay for itself.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- Landfills and incinerators don't pay for themselves; in fact, they cost more than recycling programs.
- Recycling creates more than one million US jobs in recycled product manufacturing alone. (1)
- Hundreds of companies, including Hewlett Packard, Bank of America, and the US Postal Service, have saved millions of dollars through their recycling programs.
- Through recycling, the US is saving enough energy to provide electricity for 9 million homes per year. (2)

THE ATTACK: There are no markets for recyclables.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- Prices may fluctuate as they do for any commodity, but domestic and international markets exist for all materials collected in curbside recycling programs.
- Demand for recycled materials has never been greater. American manufacturers rely on recyclables to produce many of the products on your store shelves.
- By the year 2005, the value of materials collected for recycling will surpass \$5 billion per year. (1)
- All new steel products contain recycled steel. (7)
- Over 1,400 products and 310 manufacturers use post-consumer plastics. (8)
- In 1999, recycled paper provided more than 37% of the raw material fiber needed by US paper mills. (9)



THE ATTACK: Recycling is a burden on families.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- Recycling is so popular because the American public wants to do it.
- More people recycle than vote. (10)
- More than 20,000 curbside programs and drop-off centers for recycling are active today because Americans use and support them. (3)

THE ATTACK: Recycling doesn't really have any effect.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- 94% of the natural resources America uses are non-renewable (up from 59% in 1900 and 88% in 1945). Recycling saves these non-renewable resources. (1)

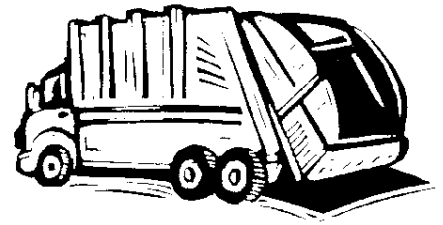
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- With recycling, 20% more wood will need to be harvested by 2010 to keep up with demand. Without recycling, 80% more wood would need to be harvested. (4)
- 95% of our country's virgin forests have been cut down, and less than 20% of paper manufactured in the US comes from tree farms. (4)
- It takes 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than it does to make it from raw materials. Making recycled steel saves 60%, recycled newspaper 40%, recycled plastics 70%, and recycled glass 40%. Landfilling never saves energy! (4)
- Recycling saves 3.6 times the amount of energy generated by incineration and 11 times the amount generated by methane recovery at a landfill. (2)
- Using scrap steel instead of virgin ore to make new steel takes 40% less water and creates 97% less mining waste. (3)
- Tree farms and reclaimed mines are not ecologically equivalent to natural forests and ecosystems. Recycling prevents habitat destruction, loss of biodiversity, and soil erosion associated with logging and mining.

THE ATTACK: We don't have to worry about disposal capacity.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- Maine's four waste-to-energy incinerators are all operating at or near capacity. With 40% of Maine's trash sent for incineration, what would happen if one of those incinerators closed down?
- Maine does not have an abundance of acceptable landfill sites.
- Most states have less than twenty years of landfill capacity - who wants to live next to a new landfill? (6)
- The number of landfills is decreasing, while the cost to send waste to them is on the rise. (6)



THE ATTACK: We are already recycling as much as we can.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- The national recycling rate is 28%. US EPA has set a goal of 35% and many communities are recycling 50% or more. (3)
- Many easily recycled materials are still thrown away. For example, 73% of glass containers, 77% of magazines, 66% of plastic soda and milk bottles, and 45% of newspapers are not recycled. (3)
- We are nowhere near our potential, especially if manufacturers make products easier to recycle.



THE ATTACK: Recycling causes pollution.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- Recycling results in a net reduction in ten major categories of air pollutants and eight major categories of water pollutants. (3)
- Manufacturing with recycled materials, with very few exceptions, saves energy and water and produces less air and water pollution than manufacturing with virgin materials.
- By 2005, recycling will reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 48 million tons, the equivalent of the amount emitted by 36 million cars. (1)

THE ATTACK: If recycling makes sense, the free market will make it happen.

THE COUNTER-ATTACK:

- Government supports many services that the free market wouldn't provide, such as the delivery of running water, electricity, and mail to our homes.
- Unlike most public services, recycling does function within the market economy, and quite successfully.
- If the market were truly free, long-standing subsidies that favor virgin materials and landfills would not exist, and recycling could compete on a level playing field.

Source of Statistics: (1) Office of the Federal Environmental Executive, (2) Environmental Defense, (3) US Environmental Protection Agency, (4) Natural Resources Defense Council, (5) Aluminum Association, (6) Biocycle Magazine, (7) Steel Recycling Institute, (8) American Plastics Council, (9) American Forest & Paper Association, (10) Resource Recycling Magazine.